

WILSON AND JOHNSON PICKED BY GILSON GARDNER TO WIN IN CALIFORNIA

(Gilson Gardner, The Day Book's political correspondent, is now following the trail of Candidate Hughes through the western states for the purpose of gauging the political sentiment in the wake of the Republican nominee's tour. This is the first of Gardner's western dispatches.—Editor.)

BY GILSON GARDNER

San Francisco, Cal., Sept. 25.—California is for Johnson and Wilson. Johnson will carry the state by a large majority, and probably Wilson will win. The only possible chance Hughes, the Republican nominee, has, is to train in as tall to the Johnson kite; and this kite is not carrying much tail just now.

The Johnson victory is conceded by everybody whose judgment is worth considering. The only question discussed is whether Hughes can beat Wilson.

If Johnson were enthusiastically for Hughes, he could probably drag him over the line, but nobody suspects Johnson of any enthusiasm for Hughes, and everybody knows he is not attacking Wilson in his campaign or saying anything which would tend to check the Wilson friendliness among his progressive followers.

Johnson is for Hughes about as Bryan was for Alton B. Parker in 1904, and much as Roosevelt is for Hughes now.

California may see a strange political phenomenon—a big majority for the Republican, (progressive) candidate for the United States senator and a comfortable or good-sized majority for the Democratic candidate for president.

I am not forgetting that this state is normally strongly Republican. I am not forgetting that the Republican registration is nearly two to one, and that the southern part of the state is normally heavily stand-pat, reactionary, smug Republican.

The answer is that the voters who, in past elections, have registered as Republicans, have voted for Progressive, Independent or Democratic candidates, with complete disregard of party names and ties. It does not do any longer to assume that the registered vote can be herded and delivered to the party candidate.

California is wholly emancipated from party names and ties!

Wilson's strength in California is more difficult to gauge than that of Johnson. The governor's popularity has been mathematically demonstrated. He went into the Republican primaries and took the nomination for United States senator away from the regular stand-pat candidate, and did this without the help of three hundred thousand of his following who were not registered and therefore could not take part in the Republican primaries.

The 416,000 registered voters to whom Johnson appealed were "regular," anti-progressive drifters back to republicanism; and yet even from those he got a twenty thousand majority away from Willis H. Booth, the millionaire banker candidate selected as runner-up for Hughes. And Johnson did this without even changing his registration as a progressive.

Since the senatorial primaries the party conventions have been held in Sacramento, and by two-to-one vote the Republican convention was controlled by the progressives. So now the Republican as well as the progressive party organization is in the hands of Johnson and his progressive following.

Had this all happened before Charles E. Hughes came to campaign in California, the Hughes managers probably would not have snubbed Johnson and the progressive group as they did. It was only because they supposed the progressives were down and out that they snuggled up